

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A starter comprising:

a starting motor for generating rotation force;

a pinion shaft rotatable by the starting motor and supported slidably in an axial direction, the pinion shaft having a recess and a step on an outer periphery thereof;

a pinion fitted on the pinion shaft in a rotation-restricted manner relative to the pinion shaft and movable forward integrally with the pinion shaft, the pinion having a front end surface and a rear end surface; and

a restricting member fitted in the recess in contact with the pinion,

wherein the restricting member is in press-contact with the front end surface of the pinion thereby to press the rear end surface of the pinion to the step of the pinion shaft so that the pinion is restricted from moving in an axially forward direction and an axially backward direction.

2. The starter as in claim 1, wherein:

the restricting member is ring-shaped and has a tapered surface at a front inner periphery thereof;

the recess has a tapered wall which corresponds to the tapered surface; and

the restricting member generates resiliency to contract radially inward when fitted in the recess so that the pinion is pressed axially backward by the resiliency.

3. The starter as in claim 1, wherein:

the restricting member is ring-shaped to generate resiliency when fitted in the recess so that the pinion is pressed axially backward by the resiliency.

4. The starter as in claim 1, wherein:

an axial distance between the rear end surface and the front end surface of the pinion is larger than an axial distance between the step of the pinion shaft where the rear end surface of the pinion contacts and a rear rising wall of the pinion shaft defining the recess.

5. The starter as in claim 1, further comprising:

a cover for restricting the restricting member from disengaging radially outward from the pinion shaft when the pinion shaft is rotated by the starting motor.

6. The starter as in claim 5, wherein:

the cover is provided at a front end portion of the pinion shaft and fixed to the pinion to surround an outer periphery of the restricting member.

7. A starter comprising:

a starting motor for generating rotation force;

a pinion shaft rotatable by the starting motor and supported slidably in an axial direction, the pinion shaft having a recess on an outer periphery of a front end portion thereof and a step

on the outer periphery thereof;

a pinion fitted on the pinion shaft in a rotation-restricted manner relative to the pinion shaft and movable forward integrally with the pinion shaft, the pinion having a front end surface and a rear end surface;

a restricting member fitted in the recess in front of the pinion in an axial direction to receive the front end surface of the pinion; and

a pressing member disposed between the pinion and the pinion shaft at a rear side of the pinion for pressing the pinion against the restricting member,

wherein the rear end surface of the pinion adjacently faces the step in the axial direction.

8. The starter as in claim 7, further comprising:

a cover for restricting the restricting member from disengaging radially outward from the pinion shaft when the pinion shaft is rotated by the starting motor.

9. The starter as in claim 8, wherein:

the cover is provided at a front end portion of the pinion shaft and fixed to the pinion to surround an outer periphery of the restricting member.